DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 271 001 FL 015 766

AUTHOR Smadi, Oglah
TITLE Negation in Jordanian Arabic: A Developmental Study.
PUB DATE Apr 83
NOTE 17p.; In: Proceedings of the Annual Linguistics Conference (2nd, Irbid, Jordan, April 1983). See FL 015 762.
PUB TYPE Reports - Research/Technical (143) -- Speeches/Conference Papers (150)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Arabic; Case Studies; *Child Language; Contrastive Linguistics; *Developmental Stages; Dialects; Infants; *Language Acquisition; *Negative Forms (Language); *Time Factors (Learning)
IDENTIFIERS Jordan

ABSTRACT

The acquisition of negative forms by a Jordanian Arabic speaker as evidenced in utterances from 19 months of age is examined. The language corpus consisted of selective samples of spontaneous daily speech and biweekly recorded speech sessions. Results suggest that although the subject's negation system is incomplete, it will be acquired by age 5. The findings affirm the developmental nature of the process of acquisition of the Jordanian Arabic negation system and the developmental sequence suggested by previous research, with a rule being modified more than once depending on the subject's developing linguistic competence. The findings do not entirely support the developmental stages proposed by previous research, especially in the cases of anaphoric versus non-anaphoric negation acquisition and intrasentential negation. (MSE)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
Jonathan Owens
Issam Abu-Salim
TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

ED271001

FL015 766

NEGATION IN JORDANIAN ARABIC:
A DEVELOPMENTAL STUDY

Oglah Smadi

Introduction

The systematic study of negation acquisition goes back to the early years of this century. Wode (1977) surveys those studies in German and French which were carried out between 1907 and 1947. More comprehensive studies of negation acquisition were done during the sixties (Klima 1964; Klima and Bellugi 1966; Bellugi 1967). Such studies were an attempt to find out evidence for the psychological reality of the linguistic description proposed by the generative transformational theory. Klima, Bellugi and McNeill (1970) claim that stages of negation acquisition by American children coincide with the steps of the derivation of negative sentences in transformational grammar. Although Bloom (1970) differs with Bellugi (1977) in the interpretation at the Neg + S structure and so does not consider this structure as the first stage of negation acquisition, she agrees with her as well as with Klima and McNeill in their claim that "stages children pass through in acquiring the negative system of English run parallel to the stages of the derivation of negative sentences in transformational grammar" (deVilliers et al., 1978:104). Omar (1973) and Lange and Larssen (1973) also followed Bellugi's framework in their studies of negation acquisition in Egyptian Arabic and Swedish respectively.

This claim has been challenged by other findings in the literature on the acquisition of negation by children of different language backgrounds (deVilliers et al., Wode 1977; Park 1978). The present study and those of Wode and Park make it dubious to assume that the data on negation acquisition provided by Klima, Bellugi, McNeill and Bloom are relevant as a test of the transformational model.

The Subject, Data Collection, and Analysis Procedure

The subject of the study is a healthy female child whose age was 19 months when the recording of her speech started. JA is the language used at home. A thirty-minute speech session was held and recorded every two weeks in which the subject and researcher or any member of the family participated. A record of selective samples of her daily spontaneous speech was taken and transcribed in a separate diary.

The mean length of the subject's utterances (MLU) was calculated following Brown's rules (1973:54) with the necessary adaptations for Arabic. The subject's utterences under analysis were transcribed chronologically and with the number of the tape, with the aim of finding out the developmental nature of the acquisition of the grammatical structures under study.

A Sketch of Rules of Negation in JA

1. Free morphemes

   a. la? with the alternative forms lā and la?ah

$$S \longrightarrow \begin{cases} la? + (S) \\ (S) + la? \\ l\bar{a} + VP + sh + (X) \end{cases}$$

la? mish hon: 'No, he isn't here.'

lā: 'No'.

huwwa la?ah: 'He, no.'

lā tukitbiish iddars: 'Don't write the lesson.'

b. Wala

S ⟶ (X) + Wala + NP

Wala + ?ishi: 'Not a thing.'

Inta rūh wala zalamih hnāk: 'Go, no man is there.'

c. mū or mish:

S ⟶ Subj. + mish + pred

?inta mish rāyih: 'You are not going'

S ⟶ (X) + mish + rah / 'am / ?ā^{c}id + V + (Y)

hiyya mish ^{c}am btuktub: 'She isn't writing.'

S ⟶ (X) + mish + modal + V + Y

modal lazim, mumkin, yimkin

?irrajul mish lāzim yil^{c}ab:

'The man must not play.'

d. The bound morpheme ma...sh

S ⟶ Topic + ma Prep P sh + Subj
comment

?ilwalad ma^{c}indush ktāb: 'The boy doesn't have a book.'

S ma Pr pers sh + Pred
Pr indef

mantush katbīn: 'You didn't write'. OR
'You aren't going to write.'

mahaddish barra: 'Nobody is outside.'

S ⟶ (X) + ma sh + (Y)

ʔana mashifithāsh: 'I didn't see her.'

S ⟶ (X) + ma Mod sh + V + (X)
Mod time marker

huwwa makanish badduh yīji: 'He wasn't going to come.'

S ⟶ (X) + ma imperfective sh + (Y)

matigrāsh: 'Don't read.'

e. la ... wala

S ⟶ la + NP + wala + NP

lana wala ʔintih: 'Neither me nor you.'

f. lā? with the suffix sh in the imperfective

S ⟶ lā + V imperfective + sh + (X)

lā truhish barra: 'Don't go outside.'

The Developmental Sequence of the Negative Rules in JA

Before discussing stages of the acquisition of the negative system by the subject, the terms anaphoric and non-anaphoric negation have to be clarified. 'Anaphoric' means that the negative word in a negative utterance refers to something said previously, i.e. negates a previous utterance, and the sentence with which this negative word occurs is "an affirmative contradiction." Thus 'no water' might have been said in response to 'it's soup' or 'no mother' in response to 'it's father'. Non-anaphoric means that the negative relationship holds between the negative word and some part of the whole utterance with which it occurs, e.g. 'I don't want to go'. Here the negative word is an intrinsic part of the utterance.

The use of /mū/ or /mish/ is predicted to appear early in the subject's speech since it does not require any change in the structure of the individual words it negates. The mastery of the acquisisiton of /ma ... sh/ is supposed to come later in the course of negation development because its use requires morphophonemic changes that have to take place in the words it is attached to such as the lengthening of the final vowel and the shifting of the major stress to it.

The proposed tentative boundaries between the stages of the acquisition of negation by the subject will be determined by the syntactical development of the negation transformations and their forms in the subject's speech.

Stage I: One-word Negation

The free morpheme /lā/ was used by the subject in Tape 1 (age 19.5 and MLU 1.22). Other variations of /lā/ were used in the data as /la?ah/, /la?/ and /na?/. I can safely say that the one-word negation morpheme was used by the subject before age 19 months since children tend to use /nā/ or /na?/ as early as the age of 15 months. The

negative system at this stage can be summarized as:

S ⟶ /lā/

Stage II

New developments in the negative system mark this stage such as the use of the negative bound morpheme /ma ... sh/, the negative particle /mū/, non-anaphoric negation, and the negated imperative.

1. The bound morpheme /ma ... sh/ is not fully mastered before tape 15 (age 26.16 and MLU 2.37). The prefix /ma/ is used in tape 15 while the suffix /-sh/ is used alone before this tape. It appeared in tape 4 (age 22.1 and MLU 1.65) in such utterances:

   /ʔiddish ʔana ʔisshrab/: 'I don't want to drink.'

   /hibbūsh ʿarabi/: 'I don't like Arabic.'

   The full mastery of ma ... sh is never attained by age 3. Errors in its usage still occur in the subject's speech.

2. Non-analphoric negation is used for the first time in tape 4 in the following utterances:

Adult	Child
/ʔiʿtīh laddāha/:	/lā ʔiddāda/:
'Give it to your sister.'	'No my sister.'
/tishrabi ħalīb/:	/lā hīb/:
'Do you want to drink milk?'	'No milk.'

Such appearance contradicts Wode's findings (1977) in which he states that anaphoric negation appears before non-anaphoric. Anaphoric negation appears later as part of the syntactical developments of the third stage.

3. Repeating the negativity to stress the subject's denial or refusal of what the adult suggests, requests or asks is a linguistic device that appeared in the data in tape 4. /lā/ and /mū/ or the bound morpheme are used in such construction as illustrated in these examples:

Adult	Child
/tithammami/:	/lā ʔiddish hammam/:
'Do you want to take a bath?'	'No, I don't want to take a bath.'
/hēk ʔarubtuh/:	/lā mū hēk/:
'Can I tie it this way?'	'No, not this way.'

4. The negative particle /mū/ is used for the first time in tape 9 (age 24.3 and MLU 2.56) in an initial position, and continues to appear in this position at this stage although the invariable usage of /mū/ in other positions is allowed in the subject's dialect. Such utterances were produced at this stage:

/mū shāttih/:	'She isn't good.'
/mū hāi/:	'Not this.'
/mū mamma hōn/:	'Mamma isn't here.'

5. The negated imperative occurs for the first time in tape 13 (age 25.28 and MLU 2.51) but without the correct imperative marker /ti-/. Such a form continues to occur up to tape 18. The subject's rule of negating the imperative simply reads as follows: "Add /lā/ initially to the imperative sentences" The following examples illustrate this rule:

/lā ʔizzali/: 'Don't get down.'

/lā ʔizzaᶜīh/: 'Don't tear it.'

/lā ʔittaḥ/: 'Don't open (it).'

The production of the imperfective form of negated imperative occurs at this stage but without using the suffix /-sh/. Here are some examples:

/Muna lā tulīha/: 'Muna, don't get it.'

/lā taᶜmīha/: 'Don't feed it.'

The negation system of the subject at this stage may be summarized as follows:

1. S----→ /lā/ + (S)
2. S----→ (NP) + VP + /sh/ + (X)
3. S----→ (lā) + VP + /sh/ + (X)
   /mū/ + X
4. S----→ /mū/ + S
5. S----→ /lā/ + V + X
   imper
   imperfective

Stage III

More linguistic developments in the negation system occur at this stage such as the emergence of the correct usage of /mā ... sh/, the production of /wala/--"not a ..." negative forms, anaphoric negation, the use of /mū/ and /mish/ in sentence initial and medial position, and the beginning of the correct usage of the negated imperative forms.

1. /ma ... sh/ is used correctly in tape 15 (age 26.16 and MLU 2.37) and in the successive tapes together with the /-sh/ form also. Here are some examples:

/madallish ʔahwah/: 'There is no coffee left.'

/ʔana mashāfish/: 'I didn't see.'

/hiyya nāmatish/: 'She didn't sleep.'

The incomplete mastery of the /ma ... sh/ morpheme even by age 36 months might be due to the complex linguistic structure of this negative form. To produce the /ma ... sh/ negative structure correctly, a native speaker of JA has to prefix and suffix the constituent to be negated and to perform the needed morphophonemic changes on the same constituent, such as supplying the correct subject marker before the suffix /-sh/.

2. Anaphoric negation occurs for the first time in tape 16 (age 27.9 and MLU 2.58) and continues to occur in the data in the same form as in the following utterances:

Adult	Child
/ʔatla^{C}/: 'Can I go up?'	/laʔ ʔizzali/: 'No, get down.'
/ʔu^{CC}ud/: 'Sit down.'	/laʔ ʔīmi/: 'No, stand up.'
/dalli hōn/: 'Would you stay here?'	/laʔ ʔiddi rūh/: 'No, I want to go.'

The anaphoric negation forms can be easily differentiated from the non-anaphoric forms in the subject's speech in two ways: the use of /laʔ/ and the short pause, after its production in the case of anaphoric forms.

Contrary to Wode's (1977) proposals, anaphoric negation was late in its emergence in the subject's production.

3. /mū/ appears in a sentence-medial position in tape 19 (age 28.21 and MLU 2.49) while /mish/ starts to emerge as a substitute to /mū/ in tape 35 (age 36.2 and MLU 3.64). both of these particles are used correctly at this stage initially and medially. Here are some examples:

   /hād mū tābi/: 'This is not my book.'

   /mū ma^{c} ?ubiz/: 'Not with bread.'

   /mish hilwah/: 'Not beautiful.'

   /hād mish ilha/: 'This is not hers.'

4. The correct use of the negative imperative rule emerges in tape 28, (age 32.24 and MLU 3.32) in the following utterance:

   /lā tsakrīsh ?ibbāb/: 'Don't shut the door.'

The subject's acquisition of the negative imperative rule is still incomplete since utterances with /-sh/ or /t-/ still only appear in the subject's speech, as in the following utterances:

/lā txabbi dujji/: 'Don't hide my drawer.'

/lā rūhīsh/: 'Don't go.'

The incomplete acquisistion of the rule that generates the correct utterances in such structures may be due to the difficult nature of the morphophonemic changes in the negated constituent that its application requires. Unless the rule that enables the child to produce correctly the subject or object markers is acquired, a native speaker of JA will make errors in producing the negative imperatives.

5. /wala/ occurs in tape 28 together with /ʔishi/ "thing" to mean "nothing or not a thing" and both continue to appear in the data together. Here are some examples:

Adult	Child
/shū baddik/:	/wala ʔishi/:
'What do you want?'	'Nothing.'
/shū ᶜala ᶜyuuk/:	/wala ʔishi ᶜala ᶜūni/:
'What is on your eyes?'	'Nothing is on my eyes.'

/Wala/ is used also in JA with nouns and pronouns, but the subject seems to have acquired /wala ʔishi/ as one inseparable unit or word since they always occur together in the adult's speech.

The negation system of the subject at this stage may be summarized as follows:

1. a: S----→ (NP) + VP + /-sh/ + (X)

   b: S----→ (NP) + /ma V sh/ + (X)

2. S----→ /lā/ + (S)

3. S----→ /laʔ/ + S

4. S----→ /mū/ + S
   /mish/

   subj. + /mū/ + Pred
   /mish/

5. $V_{(imper)}$ ----→ /lā/ + $V_{(imperfective)}$ + X

   $V_{(imperfective)}$ + /-sh/

6. S-----→ /wala ʔishi/ + (S)

Discussion

The full acquisition of the negation system in JA by the subject is yet incomplete; errors in the use of the negative bound morpheme /ma ... sh/ and the negative imperative still occur in her speech. The /lā ... wala/ negative construction has not yet appeared in her speech. It is predicted that the acquisition of the negation system will be complete by the age of 5. This prediction is based on information collected from another subject by an M.A. student at Yarmouk University (Barham, 1980).

The findings affirm the developmental nature of the process of the acquisition of the JA negation system as well as the developmental sequence, the rules that generate the negation structures pass through in the successive stages of negation acquisition. A rule might be modified more than once depending on the developing linguistic competence of the subject. This is typical of all children whose acquisition of their native languages are reported in literature. The development of the /ma ... sh/ rule is a case in point, where its linguistic complexity determined its order of appearance and use.

The findings of the study don't support the developmental stages proposed by Bellugi (1967). As a framework for the stages of English negation acquisition, her proposals were found incomplete and wanting. In spite of the differences between the present findings and his own findings, Wode's framework (1977) more accurately reflects the process of negation acquisition. Paralleling Wode's study, acquisition of a negation system passes through four stages of development: three of them are described in this study, and the fourth is in the making. However, the features that characterize some of these stages are different from those which Wode describes. Thus Wode considers anaphoric negation as a predecessor to non-anaphoric. This might be argued in the

case of Swedish (Lange and Larssen, 1973), but not in German where Park (1973) found that non-anaphoric negation appears before anaphoric. My findings affirm Park's but contradict them in that anaphoric negation is found to be one of the earliest linguistic developments at Stage III of negation acquisition. Wode tries to find support for his findings in Arabic (Omar 1973). She insists that Egyptian children, among other children, use first anaphoric negation. This is quite contrary to Omar's data (p. 125). The four utterances Omar gives as examples of Stage I are actually both anaphoric and non-anaphoric negative structures.

Wode also considers the intra-sentential negation as Stage III of negative acquisition. The findings of this study show that this form of negation starts as early as Stage II, although its full acquisition is attained at Stage III. The intra-sentential negation structures /ma ... sh/, /-sh/, /-mū/, and negated imperatives appeared at Stage II. Wode believes that at Stage III "numerous language-development peculiarities" still exist in the child's language (p. 100). Those peculiarities could not be other than the errors which the child still makes in producing the language which means that some of his rules are still incompletely mastered at that stage.

The three stages the subject passed through in her acquisition of the JA negation are, herein, summarized within a framework that can ve comparable with Wode's (p. 100-101):

Stage I: One-word negation

S---→ la?

Stage II:

(1) Non-anaphoric negation

S----→ lā + S

(2) Intra-sentential negation

a. -sh negation

S----→ (NP) + VP + -sh + (X)

b. Double negatives

S----→ lā + { VP + -sh + (X) / mū + X }

(3) mū - negation

S----→ mū + S

(4) Negated imperatives

$V_{(imper)}$ lā + { $V_{(imper)}$ / $V_{(imperfective)}$ } + X

Stage III

(1) Intra-sentential negation

a. ma ... sh negation

S----→ (NP) + mū V sh + (X)

N.B. Errors in the production of this negation form still occur.

b. Negated imperatives

$V_{(imper)}$ ----→ lā + $V_{(imperfective)}$ + sh + (X)

N.B. Errors in the production of this negation form still occur.

c. mū negation

S----→ { mū + sh / subj + mū + pred }

d. mish negation

S----→ mish + S

subj + mish + pred

e. wala negation

S----→ wala ishi + S

(2) Anaphoric negation

S----→ la? + (S)

REFERENCES

Barham, Salim. 1980. "The Acquisition of Jordanian Arabic as a Native Language." Unpublished paper. Yarmouk Univ.

Bellugi, Ursula. 1967. The Acquisition of Negation. Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Harvard Univ.

Bloom, L.M. 1970. Language Development: Form and Function in Emerging Grammar. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press.

Brown, Roger. 1973. A First Language: The Early Stages. Harvard Univ. Press.

deVilliers, J.G. and P.A. deVilliers. 1978. Language Acquisition. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press.

Klima, Edward. 1969. "Negation in English", In Jerry A. Fodor and I.J. Katz (eds). The Structure of Languages: Readings in the Philosophy of Language. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall, pp. 246-323.

Klima, E. and U. Bellugi. 1966. "Syntactic Regularities in the Speech of Children", In J. Lyons and J. Waks (eds). Psycholinguistic Papers. Edinburgh: Edinburgh Univ. Press, pp. 183-219.

Lange, S. and K. Larsson. 1973. Syntactic Development of a Swedish Girl, Embla, Between 20 and 42 months of age. Stockholm: Institutionen for Nordiska Sponk.

McNeill,David. 1970. The Acquisition of Language: The Study of Developmental Psycholinguistics. New York: Harper and Row.

Omar, Margaret. 1973. The Acquisition of Egyptian Arabic as a Native Language. The Hague: Mouton.

Park, Ischang-zin. 1978. "Some Facts on Negation: Wode's Four Stage Development Theory of Negation Revisited", Journal of Child Language, No. 6, pp. 147-151.

Wode, Henning. 1977. "Four Early Stages in the Development of LI Negation", Journal of Child Language, No. 4, pp. 87-102.